

106TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. RES. 500

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives concerning the violence, breakdown of rule of law, and troubled pre-election period in the Republic of Zimbabwe.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 10, 2000

Mr. GILMAN (for himself and Mr. HASTINGS of Florida) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

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## RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives concerning the violence, breakdown of rule of law, and troubled pre-election period in the Republic of Zimbabwe.

Whereas people around the world supported the Republic of Zimbabwe's quest for independence, majority rule, and the protection of human rights and the rule of law;

Whereas Zimbabwe, at the time of independence in 1980, showed bright prospects for democracy, economic development, and racial reconciliation;

Whereas the people of Zimbabwe are now suffering the destabilizing effects of a serious, government-sanctioned breakdown in the rule of law, which is critical to economic development as well as domestic tranquility;

Whereas a free and fair national referendum was held in Zimbabwe in February 2000 in which voters rejected proposed constitutional amendments to increase the president's authorities to expropriate land without payment;

Whereas the President of Zimbabwe has defied two high court decisions declaring land seizures to be illegal;

Whereas previous land reform efforts have been ineffective largely due to corrupt practices and inefficiencies within the Government of Zimbabwe;

Whereas recent violence in Zimbabwe has resulted in several murders and brutal attacks on innocent individuals, including the murder of farm workers and owners;

Whereas violence has been directed toward individuals of all races;

Whereas the ruling party and its supporters have specifically directed violence at democratic reform activists seeking to prepare for upcoming parliamentary elections;

Whereas the offices of a leading independent newspaper in Zimbabwe have been bombed;

Whereas the Government of Zimbabwe has not yet publicly condemned the recent violence;

Whereas President Mugabe's statement that thousands of law-abiding citizens are enemies of the state has further incited violence;

Whereas 147 out of 150 members of the Parliament in Zimbabwe (98 percent) belong to the same political party;

Whereas no date has been set for parliamentary elections in Zimbabwe;

Whereas the unemployment rate in Zimbabwe now exceeds 60 percent and political turmoil is on the brink of destroying Zimbabwe's economy;

Whereas the economy is being further damaged by the Government of Zimbabwe's ongoing involvement in the war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

Whereas the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization has issued a warning that Zimbabwe faces a food emergency due to shortages caused by violence against farmers and farm workers; and

Whereas events in Zimbabwe could threaten stability and economic development in the entire region: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2               (1) extends its support to the vast majority of  
3       citizens of the Republic of Zimbabwe who are com-  
4       mitted to peace, economic prosperity, and an open,  
5       transparent parliamentary election process;

6               (2) strongly urges the Government of Zimbabwe  
7       to enforce the rule of law and fulfill its responsibility  
8       to protect the political and civil rights of all citizens;

9               (3) supports those international efforts to assist  
10      with land reform which are consistent with accepted  
11      principles of international law and which take place  
12      after the holding of free and fair parliamentary elec-  
13      tions;

1           (4) condemns government-directed violence  
2 against farm workers, farmers, and opposition party  
3 members;

4           (5) encourages the local media, civil society,  
5 and all political parties to work together toward a  
6 campaign environment conducive to free, trans-  
7 parent and fair elections within the legally pre-  
8 scribed period;

9           (6) recommends international support for voter  
10 education, domestic election monitoring, and violence  
11 monitoring activities;

12           (7) urges the United States to continue to mon-  
13 itor violence and condemn brutality against law  
14 abiding citizens;

15           (8) congratulates all the democratic reform ac-  
16 tivists in Zimbabwe for their resolve to bring about  
17 political change peacefully, even in the face of vio-  
18 lence and intimidation;

19           (9) recommends that the United States send a  
20 bipartisan delegation under the auspices of the  
21 International Republican Institute and the National  
22 Democratic Institute for International Affairs to ob-  
23 serve the parliamentary election process in  
24 Zimbabwe; and

- 1           (10) desires a lasting, warm, and mutually ben-
- 2       eficial relationship between the United States and a
- 3       democratic, peaceful Zimbabwe.

